

TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE



FISCAL MEMORANDUM

HB 3062 – SB 2986

February 29, 2012

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS (012989, 013391): Deletes all language after the enacting clause. Prohibits any local education agency (LEA) operating a virtual school or virtual education program from exceeding the teacher-pupil ratio for virtual schools established by the State Board of Education (SBE). Requires every student to have the same time available for learning opportunities in a virtual school or education program. Requires the LEA to allow students within a virtual school or education program to move at their own pace but requires students to demonstrate mastery, competency, and completion of a course before receiving credit. Authorizes students who successfully complete a course or grade level more than 30 days before the end of the school term to begin work in the next appropriate course or grade. Requires the academic program to end at the end of the academic year. Requires virtual schools to ensure that virtual school students have access to materials and technology. Specifies that, at a minimum, access to technology for the student means availability of a physical computer lab with a computer, printer, and internet connection at regularly scheduled times.

FISCAL IMPACT OF ORIGINAL BILL:

Increase State Expenditures – Not Significant

Increase Local Expenditures – Exceeds \$13,125,600/Recurring Beginning in
FY13-14 and Subsequent Fiscal Years*

Other Fiscal Impact – The number of LEAs that do not have or will need to expand computer labs is unknown. The Department of Education estimates that the one-time increase in local expenditures for one computer lab will be \$36,000 for computers, printers, and internet connection. The total increase in one-time local expenditures is not quantifiable but, if needed, will be mandatory.

**Article II, Section 24 of the Tennessee Constitution provides that: no law of general application shall impose increased expenditure requirements on cities or counties unless the General Assembly shall provide that the state share in the cost.*

FISCAL IMPACT OF BILL WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENTS:

Increase State Expenditures – Not Significant

Increase Local Expenditures – Not Significant

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Assumptions applied to amendments:

- No new virtual schools will open and no additional virtual school slots will become available as a direct result of this bill.
- LEAs are currently required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-206 to ensure that virtual school students have access to a computer, printer, and Internet connection for schoolwork. It is assumed that most LEAs provide this service in a computer lab and that students are currently provided access to technology as required by law. Specifying what constitutes minimum access to technology will not significantly increase local expenditures.
- Requirements regarding student-teacher ratios and length of learning time will not have a significant fiscal impact on state or local government.
- The number of students who will graduate early as a result of moving into the next grade or course level in a virtual learning environment will be not significant.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucian D. Geise', is positioned above the printed name.

Lucian D. Geise, Executive Director

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